



MONTANA DNRC Conversation

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Meet Jeff Dobb, TLMS Programmer

by Rob Harper

“Programming magic... extraordinary problem-solving abilities... efficiency... patience... a superior product... has saved his department his salary many times over”

These are words once used by Governor Judy Martz to describe one employee's contributions to the DNRC's Trust Land Division. And if you ask around about something called the Trust Land Management System (TLMS), you're likely to hear more statements like this about a computer programmer named Jeff Dobb.



Jeff is a soft-spoken man with a warm, pleasant demeanor who converses at a slow, easy pace. He works in a tidy, well-organized office on the third floor of DNRC's Helena headquarters. Complicated diagrams of computer systems decorate his walls, and a quieting sense of calm makes his office a peaceful place to sit and work. He comes across as a very bright, mild-mannered man who chooses his words well and enjoys talking with people about his work. He describes a complicated job that many of us could never understand without a degree in computer science. But he can

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FROM THE DIRECTOR

Hello DNRC staff,

It's raining, it's pouring, and it sure is welcome! The recent moisture certainly raises everyone's spirits! And, although the recent legislative session was a bit contentious at times, the session did raise spirits for DNRC. We had a successful session both in terms of budget and legislation passed. DNRC continues to have an excellent reputation with legislators and citizens which helps to make advocacy for our proposals easier. I thank you for all of your good work on the ground and in communities as it shows when we go through the legislative process.

Some highlights from the Session are:

GIS - Department-wide we are focusing on “enterprise” GIS. Through the legislature we gained funding and FTE to accomplish this task. We will all benefit from this effort.

Trust Lands - Land banking, a successful new program, was reauthorized. We celebrated the purchase of the 18,000 Tongue River Ranch through this program during the session. TLMD also gained additional authority to enforce weed control on state lands.

Water Resources - Permitting for ground water in closed basins is now clarified through HB 831. WRD also gained staff for assistance on the Yellowstone Compact, Forest Service Compact, and ground water/surface water analysis. An interim water policy committee was also established.

Conservation Resource Development - Grant programs were well funded with some extra funding for some grants. The Missouri and Yellowstone Conservation District Councils also gained additional funding.

Fire/Forestry - A number of new statutes will clarify how we fight wildland fire in Montana. A precedent-setting law passed that extends liability for firefighters. We even have authority and funding to purchase our helicopters from the Federal government.

I'm sure that you will get updates on legislation at your staff meetings. We face increasing challenges in natural resource management, but you are all up to the task. It's nice to get extra support from the Legislature and the Governor.

Happy summer to you all – and be careful out there!

Mary



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Can We Still be in a Drought?

by Jesse Aber

This evening, June 6, the National Weather Service is calling for heavy snow across the state from the Bitterroots and Sapphires west of the Divide throughout the mountains of central, south central, and southwest Montana down to 5,500 feet elevation.

Precipitation totals as of June 6 for the water year, Oct. 1, 2006 to present, range from about 90 to 135 percent of normal, at most locations with only a

few exceptions. See links 1 and 2 at the end of this article.

The last 24 hours has brought from one-quarter of an inch of moisture over large parts of the state to almost 2 inches to Red Lodge. Carbon County has been in the heart of Montana's drought for five years or more. The atmosphere is noticeably more active than most weather watchers can remember. Mois-

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Programmer, continued from page 1

explain this work in language anyone can grasp.



Jeff takes a ride on his Honda Silver Wing megascooter to one of his favorite local spots, the Gates of the Mountains. Photo by Janel M. Favero

Jeff came to the DNRC in 2001, when the agency needed to overhaul its aging Trust Land record-keeping system, then called STLMS. Now called TLMS, the vastly revitalized system is a state-of-the art comprehensive database management system housing information on all aspects of Montana's School Trust Lands. DNRC staff along with legislators, landowners, the State Land Board, oil and gas companies, real estate firms, federal agencies, and the public depend on this system's information every day. Years ago, TLMS was just a concept.

Jeff's initial marching orders were to coordinate this project with a group

of consultants. Their task: resurrect an archaic record-keeping system to consolidate information on everything from mineral land-leasing records to timber sale inventories into an easy-to-use central database.

"The old system wasn't interactive, and it wasn't online," Jeff explained, "it blew-up very often, was difficult to use, and didn't meet the agency's needs; it was 15-year-old technology at the time."

A daunting task; yet, if successful, the project would revolutionize the way DNRC does business, fundamentally improving the agency's ability to satisfy its customers' varied

information needs.

Jeff is a modest person, quick to tell me that "I did not build the system... I helped build it." After consultants built the program's basic skeleton, Jeff helped continue the assembly, as he explains, "I inherited it and did a lot of adding and rebuilding."

Nonetheless, coordinating the project required someone with deft technical skill, a diverse knowledge base, an ability to comprehend a wide-range of user-needs, and most importantly, a healthy obsession with refinement. Jeff, despite his modesty, was well-suited to this task.

Jeff arrived at the DNRC with a strong



Smith River looking downstream above Eden Bridge. Photo by Montana FWP

technical background that started in the early days of computer programming. His first 23 years of work with Montana Power Company began when he took a job as a shipping clerk in 1972 before quickly moving up into programming positions. When he left in 1995, he had handled a number of major projects while tending to a major energy company's ongoing programming needs. He created an accounting system, a program linking power circuit breakers, and also constructed an automated billing system for gas, mineral, and coal leases.

The most challenging and exciting aspect of his job, he says, was keeping up with computer technology during an era of rapid transformation in the tech-industry. "Back then," he says, "there was a dramatic change in programming and new computer hardware and software... 25MB of memory might cost \$1 Million, and today it might cost fifty cents."

As the tech-industry seemed to repeatedly redefine itself overnight, Jeff continued to keep-up. His technical skills sharpened, and he became more adaptive and gained a knack for innovation in a constantly changing environment.

While a lot of us may think computer programmers are like their computers – doing routine, repetitive tasks over and over again, this stereotype is misleading. Jeff has never gotten bored with his work, and seems to find great variety in what he does.

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BOGC Announces Essay Contest Winners

by Terri Perrigo

The Montana Board of Oil and Gas Conservation in partnership with the Montana Petroleum Association recently sponsored an essay contest for high school students. The topic of the essay was "America's Oil Dependency," and the purpose of this contest was to encourage students to research and think about the energy challenges our country faces now and in the future.

Contest winners were announced and cash prizes were awarded in May. The winners, their hometowns and their prizes are:

1st place

Mitch Everts – Helena - \$2000

2nd place

Steffanie Robertus – Bozeman
- \$1000

Runners Up - \$500 each

David Chen – Lewistown
Bryan Vadheim – Miles City
Amy Surbrugg – Helena
Ryan Swenson – Helena
Katie Hendricks – Missoula
Brianna Kienitz - Helena

UPCOMING DATES OF INTEREST



July 3	Stay out of the Sun Day
July 4	Independence Day
July 7	Tour de France begins
July 19	Annual Awards Picnic
July 20	Ugly Truck Day
July 24	Emelia Earhart Day
July 28	Martin City Disco Party
August 4	U.S. Coast Guard Day
August 13	Left Handers Day
August 27	Just Because Day
September 3	Labor Day

Drought, continued from page 2

ture laden surface troughs keep digging deep into the U.S. bringing north winds overriding southwest flow. Some are recalling 1993, when the effects of a La Nina climate event brought Helena the "Summer that Never Was" with snow on Mt. Helena in August.

Unfortunately, El Nino, the warmer and drier alter ego of its cooler and wetter sister La Nina, has more often left its mark on Montana in recent years helping create a hydrological drought that reached deep into aquifers, base streamflow and huge reservoirs. The cumulative effects of hydrological drought continue to dog Montana and this gets to the crux of the lingering concerns of NRCS regarding forecasts for late season flows.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Surface Water Supply Index (SWSI) map for May 1, 2006 looked a lot better than the May 1, 2007 map. And we know how 2006 came out with blistering heat during the longest days of the year. And indeed NRCS maintains we have yet to reckon with the woes of a mountain snowpack that came late and left early never really

getting much over 75 percent of average for snow water content.

In contrast, the total precipitation percentages for mountain precipitation for the same period were around 100 percent or better west of the Continental Divide but more in the range of 80 percent on the east side. The heavy fall precipitation filled hard-hit reservoirs and washed out campgrounds and mountain roads from Washington to Montana. But it came as rain as high as 7,000 ft. elevation, not snow.

The plains had some notable events in areas like southeast Montana where early spring blizzards launched the beginning of a remarkable and ongoing recovery as depicted by the U.S. Drought Monitor, going from Severe Drought to the complete absence of drought for that region. The good news is even spreading south to Wyoming, for months the epicenter of national drought impact. April brought well above normal valley elevation moisture to a huge swath of the state from southwest to the north central grain region. See link 3.

So at what point can copious amounts of precipitation at all elevations erase the absence of a high elevation mountain

snowpack that, in a normal year, slowly yields to daytime high temperatures of 70 degrees and nighttime lows of 25 degrees well into July? After all recent snows burned off in one to two days. The answer to that question according to drought committee NRCS hydrologist Roy Kaiser is that we will just have to see how future moisture plays into the big picture.

Otherwise, it is just a matter of time before June, our wettest month of the year, gives way to our dry season starting about the third week of July. Without a continuation of the parade of wet cool events of recent weeks, we cannot expect to avert impacts from low streamflow in river basins with low snow water and without the benefit of releases from storage projects in August and September. That is of course unless we see another 1993.

NOAA's Climate Prediction Center long-lead outlook for July through September can be found on link 4.

Precipitation see link 5.

Jesse Aber is a Water Planner with the Water Management Bureau and serves as staff for the Governor's Drought Advisory Committee.

1) <http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/tfx/dx.php?wfo=tx&type=&loc=products&fx=PCPNTOTALS>

2) http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/tfx/image.php?wfo=tx&type=data2&loc=hydro&path=hydro&fx=watyr_pcptnorm.png

3) <http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/tfx/dbgraphs.php?wfo=tx&loc=monthly&fx=aprcptnorm.png>

4) http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/predictions/multi_season/13_seasonal_outlooks/color/page2.gif

5) http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/predictions/multi_season/13_seasonal_outlooks/color/page4.gif

Rich Moy's Passion and the Politics of Water Diplomacy

by Rob Harper

"We've been fighting this for a long time... what we need now is for everyone to keep up interest, and to carry the momentum... the Crown of the Continent is just too valuable and too unique of an ecosystem to get lost in this process."



Rich Moy

This statement came from a man standing before a packed audience at the University of Montana's School of Law in 2005. The room was filled with grad students, professors, political activists, and future lawyers. They listened intently as he made the case against coal mining in the Flathead River's headwaters.

Calm and charismatic, he conveyed a sense of sincerity, purpose, and passion for his work. He approached the podium with seasoned confidence – a tall, lean, unruffled man with the long even stride of a park ranger and the affable demeanor of a Sunday-school preacher. He had a way of making a forceful argument without sounding contentious. His eyes slowly surveyed everyone in the room, as he spoke with an even cadence in a serious but positive tone. He glanced at you just long enough to make sure you were listening.

He is the elder statesman of Montana's water diplomacy – a cross between John Muir and Mike Mansfield. And any time politicians, policy-makers, or the general public gather to decide their views on coal bed mining north of the border, or something called the Crown of the Continent, chances are you'll meet a man named Rich Moy.

Rich heads the Water Management Bureau of DNRC's Water Resources Division. He's also the Chairman of the Flathead Basin Commission, a

semi-autonomous group created by the 1983 Montana Legislature to address diminishing water quality in the Flathead River Basin. Between these two positions, Rich spends his days wading through a whirlpool of technical information, public policy initiatives, and political maneuvering – trying to voice as loudly as possible the importance of protecting one of Montana's most precious resource: Water.

They say either politics corrupts the soul, or bad souls corrupt politics. Either way, this saying seems like a silly myth when you meet Rich, whose environmental policy work has both guided and given great meaning to his career as a public servant.

With the DNRC for nearly 3 decades, Rich has worked with five governors and numerous public agencies up to the national level amidst ongoing international disputes over proposed coal mining north of the US-Canada border. Recently, he was again in the middle of talks between US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Sen. Max Baucus, and Canadian officials on this issue. His main goal: protect the Flathead River Basin and the Crown of the Continent ecosystem from the imminent danger these proposals threaten.

Back in the 1970s, coal interests in British Columbia sought to expand mining operations into the headwaters of the North Fork of the Flathead River – just a short drive north of Polebridge, MT. Listed by British Columbia's Outdoor Recreation Council as BC's most threatened waterway, the Flathead River's flow into Northwest Montana supports a vast and diverse ecosystem surrounding the Flathead Valley. It also feeds the largest body of fresh-water in the Western US: Flathead Lake. Coal mining in this region threatens downstream water quality, native fisheries, wildlife habitat, and a primary resource for recreation and tourism along Glacier National Park's western boundary.

Mining also threatens something bigger than the Flathead River Basin.

The phrase 'Crown of the Continent' refers to the valleys, peaks, waters, and prairies where the north-south Rocky Mountain Range intersects with the border between British Columbia, Alberta and Montana. Members of the Blackfoot Confederacy call the region "Miistakis," or "backbone of the World." Protecting this unique and vital ecosystem has been Rich's decades-long political legacy.

Rich helped establish water monitoring activities in the Flathead River Basin, creating data to help agencies like Montana's Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), the DNRC, and the EPA assess 30-year water quality trends. From 1985-1988, Rich served as a Montana delegate to the International Joint Commission, who eventually recommended against the mining proposal. He was also involved in the signing of an agreement between then - Gov. Judy Martz and BC Premier Campbell addressing cross-boundary management issues in the Basin. More recently, in response to BC's 2005 renewed mining proposal, Rich led an international dialogue to negotiate a cooperative memorandum of understanding on the issue. Earlier this month, his work resulted in the signing of another MOU between Montana and Alberta, assuring cooperation in managing the Crown of the Continent ecosystem.

Beyond Rich's work protecting the Flathead River Basin and the Crown of the Continent ecosystem, his other conservation efforts include watershed protection efforts on the Milk, Missouri, Poplar, St. Mary's and Yellowstone rivers. He was also instrumental in coordinating watershed restoration projects along the shores of Ashley Creek, Stoner Creek, Mount Creek, and Flathead Lake.

His lifetime of conservation efforts seems to have given a deeper, richer meaning both to his work and his life in Northwest Montana – working every day to protect a place he loves.

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Forestry and Trust Land Divisions recognize employees



Dan Rogers receives a Certificate of Appreciation from Rob Etheridge at the Forestry Ceremony. Photo by Rob Harper

DNRC's Forestry and Trust Land divisions recently held their annual awards picnic in Missoula and Kalispell. Below are the awards garnered by employees in FY 2007.

Paragon of Performance

Ann Evans
Todd Klemann
John Pilsworth
Barb Powell

For work on the Habitat Conservation Plan:

Ross Baty
Gary Frank
Mike O'Herron
Kathleen Ports

For New Tech Tools Development

Jeff Dobb
John Hogland
Donna Riebe
Frank Sherman

Certificates of Appreciation

John Anderson
Julie Anderson
Sonya Germann
Amy Gannon
Dan Rogers

Fire Fighter of the Year

Jan Wheeler

Forester of the Year

Chris Pileski

County Assist Teams

Dwayne Andrews
Gail Arntzen

Craig Biggert
Jerry Buhre
Kevin Chappell
Tim Crosmer
Dan Dobler
Dave Hamilton
Tom Hughes
Pat Hultin
Todd Klemann
George Luther
Doug Martens
Marlene Protsman
Chuck Quinnell
Becky Shephard
Barney Smith
Steve Stanhope
Dwight Tague
Doug Williams
Linda Williams
Mike Wingard

Forestry Assistance Bureau

Contribution Award

Brian Quilter

SWLO Employee of the Year

Cindy Super, Administration
Chris Town, Service Forestry
Steve Wallace, Lands

Longevity Awards

30 Years

Duane Erickson
Robert Sandman

25 Years

Ken Gragg
Randall Yaeger

20 Years

Cal Minemeyer

15 Years

Richard Brady
Sue Clark
Sean Gallagher
Robert Harrington
Gerald Job
David Jones
Howard Kent
Richard Rose
Pat Troyer

10 Years

Clinton Bowman
Ashleigh Burwick
Peter Evans
Terrence Flood
Tony Liane
Stan Meredith
Kenneth Parks
William Paulin
Brian Robbins
Tal Williams

5 Years

Barbara Bennett
Josh Berg
Jesse Best
David Bluford
James Butler
Jonathan Clark
Marci Giblin
Reginald Goodwin
Nicholas Grenfell
Daniel Grimm
Matt Hall
Jesse Hauer
Jonathan Haun
Aaron Holden
Linda Holtom
Aaron King
Jason Kopp
Kim Lorengo
James Maes
Mike McGrath
Nicholas Merriman
Ernie Nace
Morgan Nelson
Joshua Price
Derek Reid
Roy Robinson
Garrett Schairer
Nicole Stickney
Chris Town
Larry Vanek
Cobey Williamson

See the Fall 2007 issue for a complete listing of employee awards from the remaining Area offices, Regional Water offices, and Helena headquarters.

Programmer, continued from page 2

After his time with Montana Power, he took his technical expertise into the consulting world where he widened his experience on many different projects. In 1998, he became Butte-Silverbow's Enhanced 9-1-1 Coordinator, and created a program that allowed 9-1-1 dispatchers to instantly locate the physical addresses of emergency calls. This job frequently sent him into the field to locate homes in often desolate areas.

"Every road had to have a name, and every house had to have a number," Jeff recalls. "I spent a lot of time getting out there and driving around to find all these remote places... so that even a podunk little street in the middle of nowhere with only 2 people living on it could be found."

Jeff says one of the most important programming skills is actually getting out there and understanding how people use your system – what their day-to-day work is like. He wants to know his product from the inside-out. He matches technical knowledge and innovative programming skills with a keen grasp of his user's needs – a vital tool for his work with TLMS.

"I need to keep a broad perspective of what every division does," he says, "so I have a lot of variety and diversity."

Variety and diversity – interestingly, these are good words to describe Jeff, whose personal interests and hobbies mirror the qualities he brings to his work. He typically cruises to his office on a 600 cc Honda Silver Wing scooter than can go 140 mph. He spends his free time fly fishing the Big Hole, Missouri, or the Madison; he's into wind-surfing, kayaking, and dancing. An avid hiker, he's also a member of the Helena Outdoor Club.

But since Jeff took on TLMS, the project required something more than technical proficiency and a thirst for variety. It needed someone who understood that change doesn't happen overnight. It necessitated a person who looked at a mammoth project like this as an ongoing process, rather than a

one-time accomplishment.

In 2001, the system was already built, in theory, but needed something else. It needed to become faster, more efficient, and more user-friendly. As one forester told me, "the thing got up and going... it came along really well; but it just needed a lot of fine-tuning – getting out the kinks... what we needed was a one-touch solution."

Brian Long, a Technical Services Supervisor who works with the program, said, "This is our version of one-stop shopping... but it's a challenge to get there."



Jeff takes the long way around, shows us a view of the Sleeping Giant. Photo by Janel M. Favero

Jeff mentions frequently his desire to make things work better. He uses phrases like "integration," "efficiency," "faster," "adding," "enhancement," "refining," and "constant-improvement," when talking about his work. There's something distinct about Jeff – a passion for refinement, a joy for small gains, a satisfaction with ongoing success. It's this personal style that makes him the perfect programmer to tackle the TLMS system on a day-to-day basis.

I posed the question to Jeff, "So is this thing finished?"

His answer: "I wouldn't say that... it is in a state of continual enhancement."

He also stresses that fine-tuning

TLMS is a team effort. "For a better perspective on that, you should talk to David Groeschl, Monte Mason, or Kevin Chappell," he urged, "they're the ones who've really helped me keep this going."

He expresses great gratitude for their work, which he says is vital to this project. "Their coaching and mentoring me in this process... and their feedback" he said, is what has helped him continue to the ongoing improvements to TLMS.

In an odd way, Jeff's office and his work remind me of stories I've read about the hillsides of Southern France – Wine country. There, generations-old wineries labor for centuries through a slow process of refinement to produce some of the world's finest wines. Season after season, year after year, these wine makers taste countless grapes and glasses of wine, paying close attention to the feedback of their customers. Then they make slight adjustments.

At the same time, they monitor climate changes, moisture levels, storing practices, growing techniques, along with the tastes of their customers around the world. They integrate this broad awareness with a superior level of craftsmanship to slowly perfect an evolving product for their customers' enjoyment. It is innovation over time.

Like fine wine, or any other feat of human ingenuity, Jeff Dobb's work takes place over time, with small challenges and small successes. What keeps him coming to work every day is his passion for what he does, his love for variety, and his innovative drive for continual improvement. He also takes a large measure of fulfillment from his commitment to the mission of Trust Lands.

"I guess it's a public service kind of thing," he said, "especially when we issue those \$60 Million checks to the schools.... I get a lot of job satisfaction from that." Hopefully the next time DNRC issues one of those checks, we'll know Jeff is relaxing on a river somewhere with a fly-rod and a well-deserved bottle of wine not too far away.

Compact Seals the Deal: Update on RWRCC's Legislative Activities

By Joan Specking

The Reserved Water Rights Compact Commission (compact) had a busy 2007 legislative session. The session saw the passage of four water compacts between the State and federal entities with reserved water rights in Montana.

The water compact between the State of Montana and the U.S. Forest Service took more than 15 years to negotiate. It passed the session as SB248 and has been signed by the Governor and the federal government. In general, the compact recognized reserved water rights for the Forest Service for administrative and emergency fire fighting, and instream flows for the South Fork Flathead Wild and Scenic River. The compact uses state law to create state-based water rights for instream flow on National Forest System lands.

Two other compacts with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Agricultural

Research Service passed and were signed into law. SB 188, the Sheep Experiment Station compact, and SB 187, the Fort Keogh Livestock & Range Research Laboratory compact, settled the administrative, irrigation, stock and emergency fire suppression water rights for these two small entities in Montana.

A water compact for U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Bowdoin National Wildlife Refuge near Malta passed the legislature as HB717. The compact recognizes federal reserved water rights for the Refuge in the form of surface and ground water. The Refuge's reserved water rights are conditioned on the execution of a Memorandum of Understanding that will be developed to establish restrictions on the use of the reserved rights to ensure that they do not worsen the existing salt problems on the Refuge.



A former railroad bridge crosses the Yellowstone River near Fort Keogh. Picture by Stan Jones

One other RWRCC bill passed in the 2007 session and was signed by the governor. The law sets up a Blackfeet Tribe water rights compact mitigation account in the amount of \$15 million as well as a state special revenue fund account to be administered by DNRC. If a water compact settlement between the Blackfeet Tribe, the State of Montana and the United States is not passed, then the bill becomes void. The RWRCC and the Blackfeet Tribe are currently working on a settlement.

Moy, continued from page 4

Rich brings to his work at DNRC a love for water and a deep connection to Montana's landscapes.

He grew-up in Missoula fly-fishing the Blackfoot river in the days when *A River Runs Through It* was still just an unwritten inspiration in the mind of Norman Maclean. One of Rich's friends, in fact, tied flies for the Maclean Brothers, and Rich himself read an advance draft of the book before it was published. But Rich's local ties expand far beyond the Blackfoot.

During college, Rich was a backcountry ranger in Glacier National Park's Belly River district – a remote, majestic corner of the Park. During this time, Rich began crafting the park's backcountry management plan as he continued school, eventually completing an MA in Ecology at the University of Montana, and working toward a PhD during his 11 years with Glacier National Park.

In the 1970s when coal interests began eyeing the Flathead River's headwaters, Rich was strengthening his belief in conservation ethics. Dur-



Rich Moy received an Environmental Achievement Award in April from the Environmental Protection Agency for his tireless efforts to protect Montana's water quality and the Flathead River Basin. Photo by Rob Harper

ing an era in which Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*, Aldo Leopold's *Sanders County Almanac*, and Bob Marshall's earlier writings changed the way people thought about their relationship to the landscape, Rich was reading and absorbing these powerful ideas.

"That was a period when my feeling about protecting this unique landscape

was coming together" he recalled, "... it's the legacy we leave our kids."

Leaving something special for our kids – it's an idea Rich repeats often. And this may help explain his persistent and unwavering commitment to over 30 years of conservation work. It's his belief in the uniqueness of this environment that keeps him motivated. And when he gets tired, it's the very thing he's fighting for that helps him recharge.

When I asked him where people would find him when he's not at work, he said, "probably fly-fishing a lot of the smaller lakes and streams in various mountain ranges – the Swan, Glacier, the Missions, and the Bitterroot."

The rejuvenation, majesty, and solitude these mountain waters offer are probably what help Rich sustain his constant effort.

I asked Rich how he's kept it up for so long, after numerous setbacks, and accomplishments. "It's my strong desire and belief in protecting the integrity of the Crown of the Continent,"

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Significant Developments Happening in Regional Water Systems

by Rick Duncan

For the Fort Peck-Dry Prairie regional water project, Apollo Construction of Kennewick, Wash, has recently mobilized at the water treatment plant location near Wolf Point for construction of the clear wells and washwater recovery basin. The initial bid advertisement went out around the time Hurricane Katrina hit (August 2005), so after several significant delays, the Fort Peck Tribes are very encouraged by this contract.


At Tiber Dam, construction work on


the vertical caisson portion of Rocky Boy's-North Central regional water system intake facility is complete. The Chippewa-Cree Tribe's contractor for the second portion of the project is preparing for the horizontal micro-tunneling from the caisson out underneath the reservoir to the location where the raw water intake structure will be. It is expected that the micro-tunneling will be completed by the end of June.

The board of directors of the Dry-Redwater regional water authority has


completed negotiations with federal officials for a raw water intake location in Fort Peck Lake, and have finalized details of an agreement with a private landowner for the proposed site of the water treatment plant. An initial draft of the federal authorizing legislation is expected to be ready for review and comment in the near future. Meanwhile, initial work on portions of the preliminary environmental review is in the planning stages.

Thumbs up, Thumbs Down


 **Thumbs Up** – Montana's US Senator Max Baucus and US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice for standing-up for Montana's right to clean water by objecting to Canadian plans to approve the Cline Mine above the Flathead River.

 **Thumbs Down** – British Columbia, who has not yet stopped their impending approval of an open-pit coal

mine at the headwaters of the Flathead River, which was recently named British Columbia's most endangered river.

 **Thumbs Down** – BP Canada Energy Co., who recently wrote Gov. Brian Schweitzer to announce their plans to evaluate "the potential development of coalbed natural gas resources in the Crowsnest coal field," a development which would threaten

water quality in Montana's Flathead River Basin and Lake Koocanusa.

 **Thumbs Up** – DNRC workers safety record is earning us money! DNRC will receive approximately \$90,000 from the Montana State Fund for their commitment to creating a 'culture of safety. DNRC will receive \$17,000 in Early Return to Work monies.

Moy, continued from page 7

he explained, "we've been protecting this ecosystem for over 100 years, and we've got to continue protecting it for our kids."

Rich's efforts are selfless, and it's difficult to get him to talk about himself. He'll much sooner tell you about his family. He speaks adoringly of his wife, who he met while working in Glacier Park one day, or about his daughters of whom he's exceptionally proud. He seems bored talking about his accomplishments – old, irrelevant news to him. It's his family, and the next generation, that remain the center of his focus, both at home and at work.

Despite Rich's reticence to toot his own horn, one cannot ignore the longevity and commitment he's demonstrated, which is why his work has not gone unnoticed.

In April, the EPA presented Rich with an Environmental Achievement Award for his unremitting efforts to protect Montana's water quality. Our elected officials also had a lot to say about his work.

Gov. Brian Schweitzer said, "Rich is a tireless crusader for the Flathead. He's been fighting the good fight for a long time as a dedicated public servant."

"No one has been more committed to this fight than Rich Moy," US Sen. Max Baucus said, "He truly is a champion

for water quality and Montana's outdoor heritage. I take my hat off to Rich for being such a solid partner."

So when the rest of us are casting into the North Fork of the Flathead, shoveling-off at Wayfarer's point, or going for a swim at West Shore State Park, we should look around and remember what we've got. We should also remember to support people like Rich who, day-in and day-out, are out there fighting so that our children and grandchildren can enjoy it. After all, it's their ecosystem too.



Visit DNRC's website
www.dnrc.mt.gov

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